

# The Church in Action

By the

REV. ANDREW RODDAN

*The Story of Ten Years  
Active Service*

in

*First United Church*

"The Church of the Open Door"

Vancouver, B.C.

*"Where Cross The Crowded Ways of Life"*

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## THE CHURCH IN ACTION

**L**ATE one December evening in 1929 I descended from a No. 14 street car at the corner of Gore Avenue and Hastings Street. I walked cautiously across the street then slowly lifted my head to look up at a big, well preserved building. A notice on the front read briefly, "First United Church."

The interrupted lines of the roof had reason and strength. The pitch fell back slowly to provide a generous auditorium. It was a fine, solid, practical looking building with its own dignity and grace. I noticed with pleasure that its spire climbed far above its surroundings.

Since that first evening in December I have looked at it many times. So have many others driving quickly by in their cars or as passengers in crowded street cars. Many people with bundles under their arms have paused for a moment's rest on our steps and looked up and read our sign. Many drunks have steadied themselves against its firm walls. It is to those who have gone quickly by or passed by on the other side that I want to read this story. Its purpose is to tell you of some of the work that has been accomplished for the Kingdom of God in co-operation with a loyal congregation and a faithful staff of workers.

One word about statistics. It is true you will find them in this story but they are presented in all humility, not to impress the reader but merely to serve as a guide to the extent of our work. Behind every number is a human being, confused, dismayed, hungry. It needs much faith to deal with hundreds of men and women crushed by folly, carelessness and circumstance and since we have been able to help so

To the  
**REV. R. B. COCHRANE, D.D.**  
the ever faithful friend  
of the Home Missionary

many we record them individually partly with joy that we have brought someone ease, partly in shame that so much suffering and poverty should be here about us.

### The Church of The Open Door.

First Church is wedged between some of the most densely populated and cosmopolitan groups in any Canadian city. Off our front steps, to the north eight thousand Japanese live in a very confined area and to the south at our back door eight thousand Chinese are packed in and around Pender Street. East and West there are thirty-one different nationalities and our records show assistance given to such widely separate peoples as Poles and Greeks, Russians and Italians. Our whole parish is pockmarked with beer salons, bootleg joints and gambling dens.

During the past ten years 95,465 individuals have been assisted in many ways. This total marks the work done among thousands of single, homeless unemployed men who flock to the coast each year. The service was given in the form of food, shelter and clothing. Many a one has been fixed up with a grub stake or a warm coat for the ride over the mountains to the prairies.

The number of families who have been helped in that time represents a total of 31,051. Help was given in the form of stoves, heaters, clothing, shelter, medicine; often a sum to tide them over when the meagre relief issue had run out and anxious parents dreaded to look into the faces of their hungry children. Careful records are kept of each family we assist and these are checked with the other Welfare agencies in our city to prevent overlapping of effort.

The work of our Welfare Industries where all manner of salvage material is handled by our workers has had a good record of service. Approximately 216,603 people have benefitted by this department of our work. They have been supplied with the necessities for a household, beds, stoves, furniture, clothing and shoes. To gather all this material and turn the junk into jobs has meant thousands of calls for our trucks. 1,886 men and women have been provided with opportunity labor in our shops.

Inside our Department crowds of people surge about the tables and shelves heaped with all kinds of clothing. They pick over piles of coats, sox, boots, hats, trousers, ties, overcoats, sweaters. Clothing is put on which is of such grotesque misfit that even the wearer smiles. Colors clash and nobody cares. Is the thing warm? Will it keep out the rain? Three weeks ago a one-legged man left the one shoe he could not use. Now another one-legged man appears who needs a shoe for the other foot. Everyone watches breathlessly while he tries it on—and it fits.

Our office doorstep is worn thin. 90,880 people have come through the open door in an endless procession and in all kinds of weather. No one has ever been refused when we knew the case was genuine; yet no one has ever been helped when under the influence of liquor. They have been quietly informed to come back later when they are sober.

Through the years, the work of visitation has gone on quietly but effectively and over 13,763 calls have been recorded. These are by no means social calls. It means climbing dark insecure stairs, groping along evil smelling corridors in cheap rooming houses and often stumbling over trunks and broken furniture. The doors of the jail in the

city, Okalla and also at the penitentiary are open to our workers. The value of all this service can only be estimated in the light of Time.

In a work of this nature a large volume of correspondence has to be carried on covering a wide field of service. An old person needs a birth certificate for the old-age pension; many have come asking us to write on their behalf to friends in the old land for material assistance and large sums of money have been entrusted to us to disburse to their poor relatives here in Canada. Altogether 164,626 letters have been written. We are thankful that a neat little China roller does all the licking of the stamps.

In the past ten years 1,059 funeral services have been conducted. The majority of these calls come from our radio audience. People whom I have never seen, but who in their last moments have expressed a desire that I should render this service. Whenever it has been possible the call has been heard and a message of comfort spoken in the name of the Master who was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Then there is the other side of the picture. In times of depression, peace and war, people will get married. Looking back over these years I see a great procession of couples, 2,077 of them, slowly passing out of my study, united in marriage. Eighty per cent. of them have been problem cases. A few are recorded in the social columns, but many of them are on the relief or police records.

The morning service of the first Sunday in each month is set apart as the day of Baptisms and our records show that 378 little children have been baptised. We encourage the parents to come to the

Church and there dedicate their children to the Lord. We have very few baptisms in the homes.

Each Christmas we have made a special appeal on behalf of the less fortunate members of our community and over 6000 well filled hampers of food have been distributed. Each case is investigated and cleared with a social service exchange. We did not forget the homeless men and the old age pensioners and in response to our appeals we have received 5,937 pairs of socks. These when filled with shaving materials were very much appreciated by these men.

One of the bright spots of our work is our Fresh Air Camp. At Camp Fircom we have one of the loveliest camp sites on the Pacific coast. The mountains and blue waters of Howe Sound make a beautiful back ground to the intensive work of reclamation that we carry on. On our fifty acres of land, 5,529 mothers and children have enjoyed a ten-day holiday at Camp Fircom.

Amid all our work for the social and material needs of our people, we have never lost sight of their spiritual needs. The process of sowing and reaping has ever gone on. The gospel of Christ has been taught and preached. We have recorded on our Communion Roll 518 who have united with the Church by Profession of Faith and 109 by Certificate. Then each year a large number of men and women have come to our Clinic and as the result of personal dealing have given their lives to God and accepted Christ as their Saviour. At our Boys' Camp last year, 1939, fifty-four older boys at the Chapel service responded to an earnest appeal and accepted Christ as their Saviour and leader.

No doubt the question will arise, "how is the

money provided to take care of all this work? As this work is under the direction of the Home Mission Board of the United Church of Canada and the Home Mission Committee of the Presbytery, a grant is made to provide for the salaries of the members of the staff.

This leaves all other monies raised to be applied directly to the work. Part of this money comes from the congregation, and as a large number of them are on relief or are border-line cases, they have done their part splendidly.

Then, First Church has a host of friends who believe in practical Christianity and they remember us by their gifts, many of them anonymous. Every gift we receive, either in cash or kind, is duly acknowledged.

I would like to add a word about another group of worthy people. From time to time, our hearts are made glad when we learn that some good friend, after having made provision for their loved ones in their wills, remember the work of First United Church. I trust that God may guide someone who may be impressed through the reading of this story to follow their good example.

Every organization and department of our work presents a financial statement, properly audited, to the Annual Meeting of the congregation.

#### The Man Without a Home.

These are the headlines of our story but the half has not been told. During the year 1930-31 the full effects of the depression were being felt on the Pacific coast. Thousands of single men engaged in public works and varied projects were dismissed and no provision made for their future welfare. The

Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments had no adequate plan for them and so they began to drift to the coast. Here they dug in along the water front and at the city dump off Prior and Campbell Avenue they built up their jungles.

When Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan visited Vancouver he called to see me and talk over our work. I asked him if he would like to visit the "Jungles." For a moment he was perplexed. "Jungles?" he said, "What you mean? This is a civilized country, No!"

"Well," I replied, "We will see."

I shall never forget watching him crawl into one of these wretched hovels in which a Scotsman, a Swede, and a Norwegian lived.

The words of Ezekiel came to my mind when he wrote: "I sat where they sat." After walking through this place of human desolation, and speaking to the men of many different nationalities, we came back to the church.

In our conversation I said: "Dr. Kagawa, we have always associated poverty and human suffering on a large scale with Oriental countries. Tell me what your answer is to all this?"

He looked at me with those keen but kindly eyes of his and said:

"Mr. Roddan, It is true we have poverty, and suffering, and unemployment in the Orient. But we are young in the ways of western civilization. We do not have anything like this in my country. We would put these men to work—make roads—make bridges—give them work."

"Tell me, then, Doctor, what is your answer for this problem, economic and social?"

I wish you could have heard him say: "The application of the principles of the Cross. There is no other answer."

These were his thoughts, and I think you will agree with me he was, and is, right.

But here was a challenge right at our door which we dare not ignore. We made plans to deal with the situation. The Presbytery of Vancouver under our direction organized the ladies of the various churches and every day for many months these men were fed in First Church and also at St. Andrew's Wesley. Over a thousand men a day were taken care of in this way. Many of these men realized for the first time that the Christian Church did care for their bodies as well as for their souls. The work was extended to the Jungles themselves and our trucks rolled over to the city dump where the great bulk of the men were hanging on and food was distributed to thousands of them there each day for seven months.

One of the public officials in the city said at a meeting, "If it had not been for the work of First Church there would have been much blood shed in the streets of Vancouver." Money and supplies poured in to enable us to carry on this work. Rich and poor alike were anxious to help these men in their desperate plight. In response to our radio appeal one firm offered eighty tons of potatoes, another donated twenty tons of onions and we flavoured the whole of the East End with them.

One butcher came to me and said, "Now, if you can use sheep heads, I can give you all you want." I said, "Send them along and don't forget the tails so that we can demonstrate how to make two ends meet." Literally tons of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables

and thousands of loaves of bread were sent in. They had a strike in one of our local bakeries. I asked the manager about the batch that had been baked but never delivered. He said, "You can have them all." Our trucks were right on the job and we took away 15,000 loaves of bread.

Hundreds of the men came to our Church services. I remember one young lad coming to me and saying, "Do you know what this is?" He showed me a badge on his sweater. For a moment I could not make it out. "That is my Tuxis badge. Now I am at loose ends, no job, no home, but I want to go straight. What can you do for me?"

Many of these men died. One morning I received a call from an Undertaker asking me to conduct the service for three of them. The rough wooden coffins were loaded into two hearses and we drove slowly out to the cemetery. At the grave side there were no pall bearers and no mourners. The Undertaker, and his assistant, a grave-digger and myself lifted out the three coffins and placed them in their last resting place. They were somebody's boys.

Hundreds of men thanked us for what the Church had done for them in a time of emergency. I told this story at length in a book, "God in the Jungles," and the proceeds of the thousands of copies which we sold were used to assist many of these men on to their feet. As the result of pressure brought to bear on the proper authorities that phase of the problem has passed. New plans and policies have been tried but the basic problem is still with us. It will continue to be one of our major social problems in Canada until our governments realize that human values come first.

During these ten years past we have always continued to distribute blankets, shoes and coats and at Christmas each year we have distributed from a thousand to fifteen hundred pairs of socks filled with the things which a man needs but cannot buy. We know that in the hearts of many of these men there is a kindlier feeling towards the Christian Church because of the interest and sympathy shown in a time of need.

#### **Holding the Fort.**

First Church has always been a strong preaching centre. Here great social and moral issues have been dealt with showing no fear or favour. I have had great joy in proclaiming the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to multitudes who have thronged the building each Sunday. At one time so great were the numbers coming to our evening services that we arranged a double service in the evening. We never forgot the collection, indeed several times I had it taken twice.

At some of these services we have had stirring times. On more than one occasion the Communists have sung the "Red Flag." In the confusion which usually followed some would call, "Send for the police." "No," I said, "I shall never ask the police to come into my Church. Just be patient." Then turning to the Communists I would say, "Well, I certainly like the tune, fellows, but I do not like the words."

At the time of our Golden Jubilee, I invited the Mayor of Vancouver to speak at the evening service. Just at that time we had some serious disorders in the city. The longshoremen were on strike and the single men were restless; agitators were making the most of the opportunity to cause trouble. A large group of men and women had packed the Church

before the regular congregation came in. They remained quiet until the Mayor rose to speak. At a given signal, it seemed as if Pandemonium had broken loose. When they had filed out of the Church our members came in and the service proceeded in an orderly manner. But it required eleven policemen to get the Mayor safely out by a side door after the service.

#### **"First United Church Calling."**

For many years our Church has been one of the pioneer voices on the radio. This instrument has opened the door to a wide service. Thousands of letters have been received from all kinds of people. Some have written to say that while they have been listening to the gospel in song and sermon God has spoken to them in the quietness of their hearts and they have been led to accept Christ and rededicate their lives to His service. A man came to me one morning and said, "I have not been in Church for thirty years. I accepted your invitation to come and am glad. I have a new interest in life." From lighthouse keepers on the lonely stations along the coast, from loggers and fishermen, from ships in the harbour and at sea and from many a lonely settler far from a Church have come messages of appreciation. As far north as Dawson City and as far south as the Panama Canal the message of hope has brought a word of thanks.

The cost of the radio is provided by the voluntary contributions of those who listen. One of the interesting features about our radio work has been the number and variety of appeals which have been made. The response has been most generous. It would take a long time to tell of all the work that has been done. The appeals are made for the needs

of our work and for every good cause working in the interests of the Kingdom of God.

Here are only a few. One of our missionaries on the West coast needed a car to help him in his work. An appeal was made and shortly afterward a car was provided by a kind friend.

Just recently the W.M.S. opened a kindergarten in our parish. They needed a piano. I told the story and asked for one. A lady listening to the service heard the appeal and next morning a truck was out at her place and brought away a beautiful instrument.

A Missionary wrote to me about one of his preaching places that needed an organ. In a short time an organ was on its way. This has happened many times now.

The Captain on one of our West Coast Mission boats needed a pair of binoculars. A dear old lady who was listening to our appeal cast her eyes on a pair lying on the table. They had been a present to her husband who was a seafaring man. She gladly gave them to me and they were sent forward to the Missionary and are now in use.

Another Missionary wrote to me asking about a communion set for one of his appointments. I told the story on the radio and suggested that some one present this communion set in memory of a loved one. A response was soon forthcoming and a lovely communion set was dedicated in loving memory. This also has been repeated several times.

One day a gentleman came into my office. He laid a very fine coonskin coat on the table and told me to give it to some Missionary as he was leaving

for the Old Country and would require it no longer. I sent it to the Missionary farthest north and with the longest drive. Later I had the pleasure of meeting him on the platform at the General Council in Hamilton.

That incident gave me an idea. I could see lots of fur coats for both men and women brought out from the prairie by people who would never need them again. The Missionaries needed them more than the moths. They responded to my appeal and a large number of fur coats, mitts, muffs and gloves have been sent to the Missionaries and their wives. Judging by the spirit of the letters which have been received from them they have been very much needed.

A nurse wrote to us from one of our hospitals up north asking for a wheel chair. The appeal was made and like magic along came three chairs, one of which was sent on its mission of mercy to the North.

A new Indian Church was about to be opened and they needed a communion set and collection plates. A kind friend responded to this appeal and the Indian congregation received them with great thankfulness.

An old man whom we know very well had the misfortune to break his glass eye. In his distress he came to me for assistance and now has been fitted with a new one. Today we have a pair of lovely blue eyes which were sent in but so far have had no further calls.

Then there is the story of the man with the wooden leg. One day a man thumped up the stairs to my study. He had come from the prairies. While



working on the farm he met with an accident which cost him his leg. Now he was in despair. His wooden leg was falling apart. He had sewed it and glued it but all to no avail. Being on relief he could get no help. For a moment I was at a loss. Then I remembered that some time ago a woman had called me. She told me that her husband had died. Before he was buried she had removed his artificial limb. It was a very good one and she had kept it on a shelf. She offered it to us and we had stored it away at our Welfare Department. There is an old saying that if you keep a thing seven years you will find a use for it. Well, we sent that man down to our Welfare, the leg was adjusted so that he could use it and he thumped back to our office with tears in his eyes. When I saw him I told him to bring his new leg and all his family to Church next Sunday. He did.

One day a mother and daughter came to Church. They were on relief and she wanted to get a dress for her girl. She informed me that her girl was musical and that she had entered the violin class at the Musical Festival but she did not have a dress fit to wear. Through our Welfare a dress was provided and she won first prize. Each year she has competed now she has worn the same dress and when it became too small we gave her a new one. I have her photo taken with her violin. Since that first contact she has won twenty-seven first prizes for her work. Unfortunately her parents are still on relief. I often wondered what would have happened if she had come from a home where she might have had a better chance.

Another day I stood in a bare room in a very poor home in the East End. I looked down on twin baby boys. They were clean and wholesome, but

I noticed they were lying in two cartons with the ends removed for their feet, yet as contented as if they had been in satin-lined cribs. I asked the mother if she had cribs or a baby carriage for them. She said, "No, when you are on relief you cannot afford those things." Next Sunday I appealed for a baby buggy and by the end of the week a dozen of them were lined up in our halls. They didn't stay there long.

During a very prolonged cold snap in Vancouver there was much suffering among the poor. One day I was called to the hospital to baptise a little baby that was dying of pneumonia. When the father told me his story I wondered how many more must be in a position like his. They were on relief. The issue for fuel was \$3.75 per month. When that was gone the house got cold and the children took sick. This little fellow struggling for his life, now was receiving every possible care but he might have been spared this suffering if there had been a few sacks more of coal in that home. That Sunday over the radio I appealed for five hundred sacks of coal to meet a desperate situation. We kept the telephone open in the office and when our appeal was closed the following Sunday we had received three thousand sacks of coal. For weeks afterwards many fires were lighted in cold, damp rooms.

One could go on reciting stories of real experience through our radio service. Radios for the blind and shut-in folks; family Bibles for Mission Churches; comforts for the aged. God has honoured our service for the needy in a wonderful way and now that the power of our station is to be increased we look forward to an everbroadening service for the Kingdom of God.

### The Minister's Clinic.

Our Clinic at First Church has been a very fruitful field of service. During these years many thousands of people have climbed the narrow wooden stairs that lead to my study and there in the quietness and privacy of that room they have poured out their troubles.

I have learned that every interruption may mean an opportunity. People have come with their domestic, social and religious problems. I have met many delegations of one kind and another seeking aid with some of their difficulties. One day a group of Japanese came to see me. The Provincial Government of the day had decreed that under the new relief laws no Oriental was to be assisted. What were they to do? There was no work; they had families to feed. They had been born in British Columbia. Naturally they felt this was race discrimination of the meanest kind.

It happened that the Canadian Minister to Japan was at the Hotel Vancouver. I called him and told him the story. He made a trip to Victoria and when he returned the law was changed and the Orientals were allowed relief.

Another delegation headed by the Buddhist priest came to thank me for the services rendered, on this occasion to the Japanese people.

One day when I was leaving the office a 'phone call came in from one of the Empress boats which had just arrived from the Orient. A woman aboard wanted to see me immediately. In company with Miss Johnston I went aboard. Down on one of the lower decks we found the young woman in a serious mental state. She had answered an advertisement for a missionary in Hong Kong, without making

proper inquiry. She had spent her money in making the journey only to find on her arrival that there was no such mission. She was immediately returned and now as she had broken her residence in the United States, the immigration authorities refused to allow her to cross the border. The Canadian authorities would not allow her to land as she was not a Canadian citizen. She had originally come from Russia, lived for a time in Winnipeg and then in Seattle. For several days we worked on this case trying to work out some sort of arrangement that would be satisfactory to the authorities and finally we were able to see her safely on her way to friends at Portland, Oregon. Our church had been able to fill the breach that had crept into this young woman's life.

I have listened to many sad stories of unfaithfulness in my study. I have been convinced of the need for a court of Domestic Relations where problems of this urgent kind can be dealt with. At one time a serious situation developed when the relief authorities decided that each couple with a family of children must produce a marriage certificate before receiving any more relief. This change of policy revealed that a large number were living as common-law man and wife. There was a sudden rush for marriage certificates. In many cases where the need was desperate and the welfare of the children at stake we provided the license and often the ring.

I remember one woman coming to see me in great trouble. She told me she had eleven children by the man she was now living with and thought it was now time to get married. But after all the arrangements had been made for the ceremony she came back to inform me that she had changed her

mind. She declared that now when she had to get married she was going to marry another man whom she loved much more than the present incumbent.

Some time ago I married a man to the widow of the man he had killed on the waterfront in Vancouver. He escaped the gallows on the plea of self-defence and his way of restitution was to marry the widow.

One of the major problems in this cosmopolitan seaport is the drug traffic. Sometime ago I conducted the funeral service of a young married man. After the service his father came up to my study to tell me how his son had died. He had operated a garage, was a good worker and a good father but he hadn't been strong enough to withstand the temptation of codeine. Once he had become addicted pressure was put upon him to distribute the drug to young boys who made his garage their meeting place. Extra quantities were being supplied by neighbouring drugstores. He had died from an over dose.

A report was made of this father's statement and as a result a thorough investigation was made by the Pharmaceutical Society and the Medical Association which brought the sale of codeine and other drugs within the limits of the law.

One day the officer in charge of the R.C.M.P. asked if a number of his men might have the use of my study to watch a certain place they suspected of handling these drugs. For three days and nights the police occupied my study. At last one of their agents went into the suspected store and purchased \$850.00 worth of opium with marked money. They got their man.

The windows of our church look down on many wretched buildings that house the most appalling

vice. Emaciated Chinese and whites shuffle in and out twenty-four hours of the day. Disfigured, ugly, unkempt men and women stumble up the lane behind our church to drink their canned heat. Those on relief sometimes carry a paper bag or a carton filled with bottles of liquor. In a little recess in the lane they sit down and drink. Often the lane is strewn with broken glass. Sometimes these same men who have squandered their relief check come banging at our office door demanding food and clothes. They have always got a stern reception. When they are beyond reason or persuasion the police van is soon backing up to our door. If we happen to know them and they have children depending on them I have run them out of the office by the scruff of their neck to save them from being taken to jail. If they were ever handled rough they have had occasion afterwards to be grateful. Many of them come back later in the bitterness of their hearts to repent their weaknesses. Some are sincere and we try to help them, others are simply wanting the church to assume the responsibilities which they are too weak to face. In dealing with this whole problem one of the greatest hindrances is the indifference and apathy of many of our church people.

When dealing with domestic problems I never make a judgment or offer a suggestion until I have heard both sides of the story and in the presence of one another whenever possible. In striving for a solution I believe in the power of prayer, common sense and the guidance of God. More than one couple has knelt and instead of telling me their troubles they have for the first time confessed their short-comings before God who alone is able to deal with them.

Once I had been dealing with one family and trying to affect a reconciliation but all in vain. They then decided to break up the home. As the furniture belonged to the wife they determined to move out on the old man and leave him to fight and quarrel with himself. By holding him down they managed to get their things out of the house, that is all but the stove. Early the next morning I received a call to come at once and lend a hand. When I arrived I found that my special task was to persuade the old man to get off the stove.

#### "57" Varieties.

In Vancouver we have at least fifty-seven varieties of religion. A study of the Church page on a Saturday evening can make very disturbing reading. Many good people get confused. When I think of the number of those who have come to us in their perplexity we count it a joy to be able to bring a measure of peace to their minds. We remind them that it is not what we believe that really matters but rather, in whom we believe. When Jesus said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me," He meant what he said then and He means it today.

In all humility I am reminded of a story a friend told me once. A teacher was completing a questionnaire for one of the Social Service Agencies. One of the questions was, "What Sunday School do you attend?" One boy put down St. James, another St. Patrick's, another St. Andrew's and so on. One little fellow somehow or other got his ideas mixed up and put down St. Roddan's. What greater tribute could man wish for? I assure you I was touched deeply.

#### Fircom by the Sea.

In our Jubilee year I spent much time organizing our equipment at Camp Fircom. I wanted to get

a new dining and community hall erected for we needed it badly. I had an interview with one of our lumber men in Vancouver. After a long conversation he said, "Well, bring me the plans." I said, "I have them here." He looked at them and gave me 80,000 feet of lumber. Another business man equipped the dining hall from spoons to a huge kitchen range. Later the Provincial Government in view of the nature of our work granted us tax exemptions.

One day when the boys' party had finished a chapel service at the Camp, a little read-headed fellow came up to me and said, "Mr. Roddan, could I have a private interview with you?" Why certainly son," I replied, "come over here into the bush." He looked up at me and in a shaky little voice said, "Gee, I just wanted to say 'Thank you' for a swell holiday."

Or when the mothers were all at the table and Miss Henderson was giving them instructions she reminded them that they could have all the food they could eat. One little boy turned to his mother. "Say Mom, did ye hear what she says? We can have all we can eat." To a hungry boy accustomed to relief that was the greatest news of the year.

Our Church has never been afraid to pioneer and even in the field of art we have attempted to show the relationship between beauty and spiritual truths. Around the large panels in our auditorium three young Vancouver artists have painted some of the great scenes in the life of Christ. Orville Fisher, Paul Goranson, and Edward Hughes put great skill and understanding into their work and to them and the kind friends who supplied the paints and canvas we are ever grateful. We remember too the beautiful work of Dr. Williams Ogden. Three

of his last canvases hang on our walls. Of what use are the heartless definitions of art unless you can be touched by beauty itself? Many people have come in off the streets and stood in the quiet of our Church, then looked humbly up at the work of these men. Some have gazed up and been still for a long time.

In closing this story I would like to add a word of tribute to all those who have made this work possible. Rev. John Richmond Craig and his staff of workers laid the foundation and they did a good service.

We always remember with love in our hearts the faithful service of Mrs. Jennie C. Pentland who for many years was our Mothers' Worker. "The Florence Nightingale of the East End," she was called. She has now entered into her rest.

And we remember too Mrs. Gerald Punter, wife of Rev. G. Punter and formerly Miss Margaret Morris, for all her faithful service. Miss Jean Armstrong gave unselfishly of herself in the interests of the girls of our Church. Also Miss Elizabeth Devonshire, who did a good service among the girls in the East End.

And the long line of students who have assisted in the work. The Rev. Robert McFarlane, the Rev. N. J. Crees, Rev. Robert Stobie, Rev. William Dowie, Rev. William Selder, the late Andrew Broatch who was called to his reward at the beginning of his ministry and who during his time as assistant at First Church was loved by all the people. Rev. Vernon Smith, now of Seattle. Mr. Wesley Millar now in Ontario, and Mr. Harry Morrow who is at present with us and giving faithful service.

We do not forget the Mothers' work of our Church under the able direction of our Deaconess, Miss Barbara Henderson. In season and out of season she does a fine service for the mothers in First Church and the East End of Vancouver.

We are very happy to have the co-operation of the Women's Missionary Society in providing a girl's worker in the person of Miss Eveline Freethy, B.H.Sc. She has won for herself a worthy place in the affections of all the girls in our Church. Also Mrs. Radcliff, who is rendering a fine service in the new W.M.S. Kindergarten on Georgia Street.

Mr. A. B. Turner, our boys' worker in First Church, has established a large place for himself in the love and esteem of the boys at our Church. For over twenty years this good man has given his time and energy without thought of remuneration. His work in the Post Office keeps him busy all day and his work amongst the boys is his pleasure at night. All over Canada there are men and boys who remember with warm hearts the name of Andy Turner.

Mr. David Logie, our Secretary-Treasurer, has proven himself through the years to be a faithful servant of the Church. His wise counsel on all matters pertaining to the finances of the congregation has been most helpful and is highly appreciated.

The Superintendent of our Welfare Industries, Mr. W. G. Hayward is a man of fine Christian character and his faithful and diligent service has contributed much to the success of this department of our work.

Then of course there is our fine choir under the capable leadership of Mr. Frank Alexander.

Thousands of radio listeners most certainly appreciate their work.

Our faithful church officer, Mr. Peters, deserves especial mention. Year in and year out he lights our fires and goes about his appointed tasks with quiet courage.

Miss Hester A. Johnston for nearly twelve years now has given faithful service as Secretary in charge of all the work of our office. From her wide experience in book-keeping and office management she has proven herself competent, understanding and efficient.

Throughout the years we have always had the wise guidance of our former Superintendent, Dr. G. A. Wilson, now retired. We know that our new leader, Rev. W. P. Bunt, B.A., will be a strength to us all as we face into the future. To Rev. R. B. Cochrane, D.D., the untiring secretary of the Home Mission Board of the United Church of Canada all the members of our staff express their deep appreciation for his splendid co-operation and encouragement. And then there are my brother ministers of the Presbytery and Conference, truly their fellowship and counsel is not forgotten.

First United Church carries on. Our work has only been made possible by the fine spirit of co-operation of our faithful office-bearers and the members of our congregation; the devotion, loyalty, and affection of good friends. I could not number them here and it would not be their wish but they are remembered with kindness and love.

This story began with a picture of the cosmopolitan nature of our work. Let me close by

describing to you how in a very real sense these various national groups hold fellowship together.

For many years we have held an International Communion Service in First Church at the beginning of each New Year. Taking part in this service we have the Chinese and Japanese, the East Indians and the native Indians of B. C., the representative of the Negro church, the Scandinavian, Finnish and Russian Christian Churches. The Minister presides assisted by the Superintendent of Home Missions and the Superintendent of Oriental Missions. The Scripture is read by each minister present in his own tongue. A Japanese girl, sometimes a Chinese, sings "The Stranger of Galilee."

No one who has shared in this service will readily forget the deep impression which is made when the sacred elements are distributed by the elders to the people. At this time when the nations of the world are living in a state of fear and apprehension and the spirit of narrow nationalism is holding so many in bondage we thank God for the privilege of uniting in fellowship and prayer at the feet of Jesus.

Finally the question may be asked—"What of the future of this work?" My answer is given in the words of an old Scottish divine—"The future is as bright as the Promises of God."

### First United Church Carries On in the Master's Service



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